

Dateline DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

A Message from the Secretary

Every few years, the DHMH Secretary has the honor of being the assistant chairperson for the Maryland Charity Campaign (MCC). This past year, it was my turn.

Little did I know when we kicked off the campaign on September 5, that less than a week later the world would change, and with it, the art of fundraising.

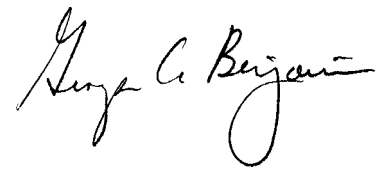
We set a lofty goal for current and retired State employees: to raise more than \$4 million for charities that help improve the lives of our fellow citizens. If successful, it would be the first time ever that the MCC hit the four million mark.

I am proud to say that we not only met our goal, we surpassed it!

By late January, the campaign raised \$4,041,506, which is 6.2 percent above the \$3.8 million raised in 2000.

And DHMH employees rose to the occasion as well. We raised \$348,588, 121 percent of our goal of \$287,123.

Thanks also to Charles Fleming, who served as the State coordinator, Clifford Smith, who managed the loaned executive component of the campaign, and to all of our loaned executives.



First Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide is Released

The Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide, which offers a detailed look at over 40 Maryland acute care hospitals, was released in January by the Maryland Health Care Commission and the Health Services Cost Review Commission.

This guide, which is the first of its kind issued by Maryland, enables consumers to review information on several facility characteristics, such as location of the hospital, number of beds, and accreditation status.

Also featured is information on 36 medical conditions, or diagnosis-related groups (DRGs), that are segmented into categories such as cardiovascular disease and digestive disorders. For each hospital, consumers will be able to compare the volume, risk-adjusted length-of-stay, and risk-adjusted readmission rate for each DRG.

Continued



Dr. Benjamin (left) receives a \$78,249.82 ceremonial check from Preston Williams, president and CEO of the Injured Worker's Insurance Fund. This check pushed the statewide total for the Maryland Charity Campaign over the \$4 million mark.

Many Maryland charities rely on fundraising drives such as ours to help make ends meet.

I was very concerned that the generosity and compassion for the victims of the September 11 attacks would impact the amount pledged through the MCC. Thankfully, these concerns were unfounded.

As most of you know, the MCC allows participants to designate specific agencies. Top recipients of funds are Associated Black Charities, American Red Cross of Central Maryland, Morgan State University Foundation, Animal Rescue, Inc, and the House of Ruth.

Other leading recipients are Diabetes Action Research and Education, United Way of Central Maryland, Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders, Make-A-Wish Foundation Mid Atlantic, and the University of Maryland Baltimore.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this record amount!

Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide *Continued*

In addition, the guide provides general information on patient rights and how hospitals are regulated in Maryland. It also contains a checklist to help consumers select a hospital, and provides guidance on what to expect in a hospital setting. Hospital data may be accessed by name or county.

Maryland is one of the few states to publicly report comparative information on hospital performance using DRGs. Data on the DRGs featured in the guide were obtained from the Health Services Cost Review Commission.

Criteria for each DRG is based on at least 40 Maryland hospitals diagnosing a minimum of 20 cases per hospital in calendar year 2000. Discharges for patients under the age of 18 and obstetrical discharges are not included in the DRG list. The Commissions plan to produce a separate guide on obstetrical services in the future.

The Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide, which will be updated at least every six months, is available on the Internet at www.mhcc.state.md.us.

Media and Public Awareness Campaign Targets Tobacco Use Across the State

Moving forward with Maryland's aggressive anti-smoking efforts, Governor Parris N. Glendening in January announced Board of Public Works approval of a \$14 million statewide media and public relations campaign

targeting tobacco use — particularly among young people. Funds from the State's share of the national tobacco settlement will be used to finance the 18-month campaign.

The campaign will focus on dramatically reducing teen smoking and encouraging smokers to quit.

The plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines and uses the State's two baseline tobacco studies, the Maryland Adolescent Survey and the Youth Tobacco Survey, to target its message. Working with local coalitions, messages will also be targeted to reach specific communities across the State.

The contract was awarded to a coalition of area advertising, public relations, marketing and research firms led by Gray/Kirk/Vansant Advertising (GKV), on behalf of the Maryland Action Partnership (MAP). MAP is composed of GKV and subcontract partners Logicon/ROW, Porter Novelli, and the 21st Century Group.

All forms of media, including print and electronic advertising, will be used in the statewide initiative. Print advertising includes newspapers and billboards; electronic involves radio and television.

Work on the campaign began in February. GKV/MAP advertisements will be in place beginning this spring. The DHMH Center for Health Promotion, Education and Tobacco Use Prevention is the contract monitor.

United for Public Health Emergency Response



*Maryland Public Health Week
April 1-7, 2002*

Mark Your Calendar!

The kickoff for **Public Health Week** will be held in the O'Connor Building lobby on Tuesday, April 2 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

This year's theme is **United for Public Health Emergency Response**. Public Health Week runs from Monday, April 1 through Sunday, April 7.

Additional information about this event will appear in the April edition of *Dateline DHMH*.

MADAP Adds New Drug

Tenofovir, an antiretroviral drug taken just once a day to attack HIV, has been added to the Maryland AIDS Drug Assistance Program (MADAP) formulary. It is the first drug of a new class of antiretrovirals that is able to fight even resistant strains of HIV.

The addition of this medication brings the total number of drugs covered by MADAP to 84.

MADAP has an active enrollment of more than 2,000 Maryland residents. The program is open to low and moderate income Maryland residents living with HIV/AIDS who do not have prescription insurance, or whose insurance is insufficient to cover their medication needs.

Start Today for a Healthy Tomorrow

Does your diet need some improvement?

If you can't answer that question, **National Nutrition Month**, which is celebrated in March, is the perfect time to evaluate your diet and make a move toward better health.

Altering your diet doesn't have to happen overnight — you can start with small changes.

For example, order once, enjoy twice. Eat half your steak in the restaurant and take the rest home to enjoy the next day in a steak salad with tomatoes or a beef and broccoli stir-fry.

Another helpful hint is to snack from a plate, not from the bag. This helps keep you aware of how much you're eating.

And, while taking active steps to improve your diet, why not put some additional activity into your daily life?

Being active is fun and doesn't have to be a chore. You can "sneak" it into your day, minutes at a time.

At work, hop off the elevator a few floors early and take the stairs the rest of the way or walk to your co-worker's office instead of calling.

At home, walk around while talking on your portable phone or take each load of laundry upstairs separately, just for the activity.

Sound silly? Making small changes over time in what you eat and your level of activity can help you accomplish big health changes.

Editor's Note: Thanks to the staff in the Family Health Administration's Division of Cardiovascular Health and Nutrition for writing this article.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, March 21 — **Workshop: Disaster Mental Health: Concepts and Techniques**; University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

Tuesday, April 2 — **Workshop: Effective Mid-Level Management in the Human Services**; University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

Thursday, April 4 — **Workshop: Treating the Drug Addicted Client: Putting Science Into Your Clinical Practice**; University of Maryland School of Nursing Baltimore, 8:30 a.m. — 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information or visit the school's Web site at www.ssw.umaryland.edu for a full workshop description.

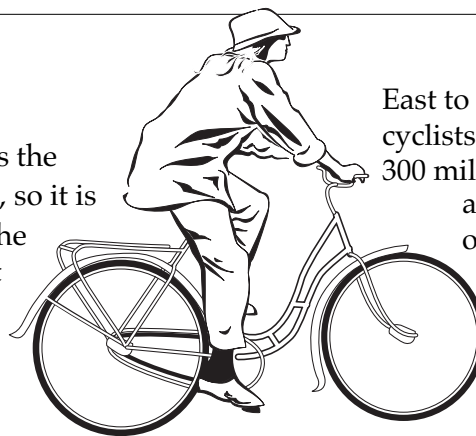
Saturday, April 6 — **Eighth Annual Update on Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias**; Renaissance Harborplace Hotel in Baltimore, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. Sponsored by Johns Hopkins Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Copper Ridge and the Alzheimer's Association Central Maryland Chapter. For further information, please call 410-955-2959. On-line registration and other information is available at www.med.jhu.edu/cme.

CAM XIV

March heralds the arrival of spring, so it is time to get out the bicycle and start training for the 14th annual **Cycle Across Maryland**.

This six-day bicycle tour, held from July 19-25, explores various scenic parts of Maryland. The focus will be on fun, unparalleled rider support, and scenic and gentle terrain. A three-day option is also available.

Riders will meander through the Eastern Shore, from North



East to Salisbury. Most cyclists will cover about 300 miles on their journey, although there are options that add as many as 150 more miles to the trip.

This year's tour is produced by

One Less Car — Maryland Campaign for Bicycling and Walking. One Less Car is Maryland's statewide advocacy group for bicyclists and pedestrians.

For more information on the Cycle Across Maryland tour, please phone 410-810-9011 or visit the Web site at www.onelesscar.org.

Congratulations to . . .

Tricia Roddy, who has been named Chief of Staff to Deputy Secretary of Health Care Financing Debbie Chang. Tricia joined DHMH last August and has worked on many health care financing issues, including MCO rate setting, HealthChoice evaluation, cost containment, pharmaceuticals and HIPAA implementation.



Henry Westray, statewide youth suicide prevention coordinator with the Mental Hygiene Administration, who was presented with the Distinguished Black Marylanders Award by the Office of Diversity Resources at Towson University. This award recognizes significant contributions to one's life work and to the African-American community.

Know Kidney Disease Warning Signs

A recent national survey reported that 11 million Americans have an elevated blood level of creatinine, a by-product of muscle activity that is normally removed from the bloodstream by the kidneys. But when kidney function slows down, blood levels of creatinine go up — one of the first indicators of chronic kidney disease.

March is **National Kidney Month**, and the National Kidney Foundation advises that when detected early, kidney disease can be prevented from advancing to a more serious problem. Four percent of the U.S. population is currently at risk for kidney

disease, but most of these people aren't even aware that their health is in danger.

Diabetes is the leading cause of chronic kidney disease, followed by high blood pressure, conditions that together affect about 70 million Americans.

If you have diabetes or high blood pressure, you should visit your doctor regularly and follow treatment recommendations to control blood sugar and blood pressure. In addition, you should recognize the following signs and symptoms of chronic kidney disease:

- Burning or difficulty during urination
- Bloody urine
- More frequent urination, especially at night
- Puffiness around the eyes, or swelling of hands and feet
- Fatigue

See your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms, but remember that you may have kidney disease without any symptoms at all. Many people may not be aware that they are losing kidney function until the disease reaches an advanced stage.

The National Kidney Foundation urges you to learn more about your kidneys and to get regular checkups that include tests for blood pressure, blood sugar, urine protein and kidney function. When detected early, treatments such as diet modification and medications can help slow the loss of kidney function.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Tara Snyder, Community Health Educator in the Center of Health Promotion, Education and Tobacco Prevention, for writing this article.

DHMH Receives \$1 Million Grant to Fight Tobacco Use

A three-year, \$1,165,991 grant has been received by DHMH to develop youth leadership efforts in the fight against tobacco use.

The grant, awarded by the American Legacy Foundation, will be used to establish local Youth Against Tobacco coalitions across the State, develop a Youth Advisory Board, expand on a partnership with the University of Maryland School of Medicine and create a Web site.

This contract builds on a planning grant awarded to DHMH in 2001 and piloted in Montgomery and Talbot counties.

The grant runs from November 2001 through October 2004.



STATE OF MARYLAND

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